

COVID-19 TESTING

Knowing the Difference Between Antigen vs. PCR

Antigen Testing

An antigen is any substance your body does not recognize that triggers it to produce an immune response

Looks for specific proteins on the virus's surface

Nasal swab – just inside the nose

Called a "rapid" test results delivered in four hours or less

Very accurate positive results. Small chance for a "false negative" – past the sixth day of symptoms, this test is less able to find evidence of the virus.

- Symptoms for five days or less
 - Need fast results
- Prefers less invasive swab

PCR Testing

It's a molecular test using a lab technique called polymerase chain reaction.

Detects the virus's genetic material

Nasopharyngeal swab – farther back in the nose

Results delivered in one to two days

Considered the gold standard for accuracy. So sensitive it can find pieces of the virus long after symptoms are gone and the person is no longer contagious.

- Symptoms longer than six day
- To confirm results from a previous test
- Need "the gold standard" for accuracy

Description

How it Works

Test

Speed

Accuracy

When to Choose

